

FOR USE SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1960

FROM THE SENATE INTERNAL SECURITY SUBCOMMITTEE

"Cuba was handed to Castro and the Communists by a group of Americans in the same way that China was handed to the Communists," Senators James O. Eastland (D.-Miss.) and Thomas J. Dodd (D.-Conn.) said today in releasing the testimony of two former United States Ambassadors to Cuba, who appeared before the Subcommittee on Internal Security. The Ambassadors who gave evidence on which the two Senators based the statement were Earl E. T. Smith, who represented the United States in Havana when Castro rose to power, and Arthur Gardner, who was Mr. Smith's immediate predecessor.

"The testimony of both these gentlemen demonstrates that American foreign policy is not made in the office of Secretary Herter on the fifth floor of the State Department," said Eastland and Dodd. "It is made on the fourth floor, by the unknown policy planners and memo makers who fill the Secretary's 'in' basket." According to Messrs. Smith and Gardner, Fidel Castro was the hero of the In-Basket Brigade. They worked with pro-Castro elements in the American press to make Castro appear as Robin Hood. They misguided American opinion in exactly the same way the In-Basket Brigade of 1945 misguided American opinion with the myth that the Chinese Communists were 'agrarian reformers'.

"The State Department has not been cleansed of those elements whose policies contributed so much to the loss of China to the free world. Secretary Herter, the man on the quarter deck, is not in charge of the ship."

The Senators drew particular attention to this statement of Ambassador Smith.

"We helped to overthrow the Batista dictatorship which was pre-American, only to install the Castro dictatorship, which is pro-Russian."

According to former Ambassador Smith, the agencies of the United States Government which "had a hand in bringing pressure to overthrow the Batista government" were "certain influential people, influential sources in the State Department, lower down echelons in the CIA" and "representatives of the majority of the United States Government agencies which have anything to do with the Embassy" in Cuba.

Both former Ambassadors indicated that William W. Wines, who had charge of Central American Affairs as Director of the State Department's Caribbean Division, was a supporter of leftist elements in Latin America. Both indicated that Roy A. Rubottom suggested policies which aided Castro's rise to power, although Mr. Smith expressed the opinion that Mr. Rubottom had done so only after "terrific pressure." Mr. Rubottom was Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs during the ambassadorships of Messrs. Gardner and Smith. He was recently named Ambassador to the Argentine.

Mr. Smith made the extraordinary revelation that William W. Wines had told him (Smith) to Herbert Matthews of the New York Times, "leave the Cuban affair alone. Matthews had been in Havana since 1951, after which he had left his post."

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When Mr. Smith reached Havana, he found out that "Castro was a revolutionary and a terrorist. From the time that he was a university student, he was a gun-toter," said the former Ambassador. "I was informed by a diplomat that he had killed two priests and two men in Bogota during the uprising in 1948."

"Whether he started out as a Communist or not is doubtful. But Castro did make a number of statements at Costa Rica and out of Mexico (before he won the revolution) which clearly showed his Marxist line of thinking."

Mr. Smith was asked by Counsel J. G. Sourwine, "Is there any doubt in your mind, that the Cuban government under Castro is a Communist government?"

He answered, "I would go further. I believe it is becoming a satellite. A Communist satellite."

"The U. S. Government agencies and the U. S. press played a major role in bringing Castro to power," continued the Ambassador.

"Three front-page articles in the New York Times in early 1957, written by the editorialist Herbert Matthews, served to inflate Castro to world stature and world recognition. Until that time, Castro had been just another bandit in the Oriente Mountains of Cuba, with a handful of followers who had terrorized the campesinos, that is the peasants, throughout the countryside."

"Fidel Castro landed on the south coast of Oriente in December of 1956 from Mexico with an expeditionary force of 81 men. Intercepted by Cuban gunboats and patrol planes, Castro and a handful of stragglers managed to ensconce themselves in the rugged 8,000-foot Sierra Maestra Range."

"After the Matthews articles which followed an exclusive interview by the Times editorial writer in Castro's mountain hideout and which likened him to Abraham Lincoln, he was able to get followers and funds in Cuba and in the United States. From that time on arms, money and soldiers of fortune abounded. Much of the American press began to picture Castro as a political Robin Hood."

"Also because Batista was the dictator who unlawfully seized power, American people assumed Castro must, on the other hand, represent liberty and democracy. The crusader role which the press and radio bestowed on the bearded Rebel blinded the people to the leftwing political philosophy with which even at that time he was already on record."

"His speeches as a student leader, his interviews as an exile while in Mexico, Costa Rica, and elsewhere clearly outlined a Marxist trend of political thought."

"The official U. S. attitude toward Castro could not help but be influenced by the pro-Castro press and radio; certain Members of Congress picked up the torch for him."

"There were a number of times, number of occasions when I was asked as the Ambassador if we would help the church in its efforts to establish a bridge between Castro and Batista, or if we, in any way, would support a national unity government. Such government would act as a provisional government in Cuba to maintain law and order while elections were being held."

"The United States would never agree to support or would never permit me to negotiate, because it would be considered as intervening in the internal affairs of Cuba."

"Batista made three big mistakes. The last big mistake he made was when he did not hold honest elections which he had promised me on numerous and many occasions that he would have. He was Minister of Cuba, and he was the one who was supposed to be the head of the government. It is true, that the U.S. Government instructed me through the

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As far as the disintegration of the armed forces around the Batista government, the answer is that this negative action helped shatter the morale of the existing government. The responsibility for the deterioration in the morale of the army, navy, and Cuban Air Force dates back to many other forms of direct and indirect--I use the word "intervention" advisedly.

"Primarily I would say that when we refused to sell arms to the Batista Government and also by what I termed intervening by innuendo (which was persuading other friendly governments not to sell arms to Cuba) that these actions had a moral, psychological effect upon the Cuban armed forces which was demoralizing to the nth degree.

"The reverse, it built up the morale of the revolutionary forces. Obviously when we refused to sell arms to a friendly government, the existing government, the people of Cuba and the armed forces knew that the United States no longer would support Batista's government.

"A decision such as prohibiting the sale of arms to a friendly nation can have devastating effects upon the government in power.

"We even did not fulfill our promise to deliver 15 training planes, which had been bought and paid for by the Batista government. In accordance with instructions from the State Department I informed Batista that delivery would be suspended, because we feared some harm might come to the 47 kidnapped Americans. The kidnaping by Raul Castro of 30 U.S. Marines and sailors, American citizens, and 3 Canadians occurred at this time.

"After the kidnaped Americans were returned we still refused to deliver these training planes because we feared that bombs could be put on the planes even though they were strictly for training purposes.

"I reiterate that decisions such as these may determine whether a government can remain in power.

"Although they could buy arms and ammunition from other sources, the psychological impact on the morale of the government was crippling. On the other hand, it gave a great uplift to the morale of the rebels."

Former Ambassador Gardner declared that a shipment of military equipment to Batista, arranged under the mutual aid pact, was "stopped" on the New York docks. He declared it was "common gossip" that Rubottom was the only man who could have stopped it.

At the same time, according to Mr. Gardner, shipments of arms and ammunition to Castro from the United States "were being sent down surreptitiously almost every night. Every once in a while we were able to catch such a shipment and stop it. But we were not very active about it, and one factor which I think was one of the most serious was that the former President, named Prío, was living in Miami. I don't know whether you know this or not, but he was arrested, convicted, and paid a five-thousand dollar fine for gun-running. He was also indicted a second time. And yet no action was ever taken on it."

This is Mr. Smith's testimony: The Batista government complained continually about the airlifts and airdrops of bodies and arms from the United States. I always kept the State Department fully informed.

"But we seemed to have great trouble in enforcing our neutrality laws. I have sometimes wished that we had been half as diligent at that time in enforcing our neutrality laws as we have been lately."

Senator Eastland: Enforcing those laws now is an aid to the present government in Cuba, is it not?

Mr. Smith: Yes, sir.

In answer to a question from Senator Dodd as to whether he had ever

"Mr. Smith. In all due justice to Roy Rubottom, I think that Roy Rubottom was under terrific pressure from segments of the press, from certain Members of Congress, from the avalanche of Castro sympathizers and revolutionary sympathizers who daily descended upon the State Department, and Rubottom may have taken the line of least resistance.

Mr. Smith said. The espionage system of the Castro people was so good that they knew nearly everything that was going on. They had their spies planted in the Cuban Embassy in Washington before Castro came to power.

"Many of these people, who later became members of the first Cabinet of Castro were exiles in the United States. They had close contacts with members of the State Department.

"To name a few. Urrutia, the first President of Cuba, Agramonte, the first Foreign Minister of Cuba, the first Prime Minister of Cuba, Miro Cardona. As a matter of fact, the first that I met Cardona was after Batista had left the country. I was about the 4th of January of 1959 in the Presidential palace. He turned to me and said, 'I am a good friend of William Winland. A very good friend of William Winland.'

Mr. Smith asserted that before the Castro forces arrived in Havana, they had been demanding tribute throughout Cuba. By the fall or the late summer of 1958, they decided to also demand tribute by American business and American property holders. Now, the closing days of the Batista regime, I believe some Americans did pay protection money. They were paying taxes to the Batista government and were also paying taxes to the Castro people.

Mr. Smith also strongly criticized the haste with which the Castro government was recognized by the United States. He declared that the State Department had ordered him to recognize the Castro government before Castro himself reached Havana in January 1959. In protesting against the making of policies by the government on the fourth floor, Mr. Smith said:

"I believe that the policies are determined at the lower echelon, and by the time the higher echelon receives them, the policies have already been made, and they have to live by them.

"I would like to recommend that some higher authority, such as the National Security Council of the United States, decide what our attitude toward another nation should be. Then all the actions of the State Department should be guided according to such policy as laid down by the National Security Council. I am sure the decision of the National Security Council would be arrived at in what is in the best interest of the United States.

"If they believed it was in the best interest of the United States to be friendly to another power and to give aid to that power, then our actions along that line should be guided accordingly."

Mr. Gardner declared that when he was Ambassador he endeavored to lay the facts about Castro and the Cuban situation before Secretary Herter, former Under Secretary Robert Murphy and Under Secretary Loy Henderson, as well as others in the State Department. He said he was "ignored, overlooked, and circumvented."

Both former Ambassadors emphasized that before Batista's downfall Cuba was enjoying the greatest prosperity in its history. "Today," commented Senators Eastland and Goldwater, "the Cuban economy has been brought to a standstill."

MEMORANDUM FOR: ~~Mr. Dulles~~ *ER*

Two copies of the attached have been
forwarded to Col. King this morning as
you requested.

mfb
12 Sep 60

(DATE)

FORM NO. 101 REPLACES FORM 10-101
1 AUG 54 WHICH MAY BE USED.

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